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Spring 2018

### PUBH 6175 RESEARCH METHODS

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## Georgia Southern University – Armstrong Campus\*

### PUBH 6175 RESEARCH METHODS

Spring Semester 2018

#### A. Course Overview

**Meeting Times:** Mondays, 5:30-8:15 pm, University Hall 151

**Instructor:**

Sara S. Plaspohl, DrPH, CHES  
 Department of Health Sciences, University Hall 154  
 Phone: 912-344-2780 Fax: 912-344-3490  
 Email: (1) [sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu](mailto:sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu) (with "PUBH 6175" in Subject line), or (2) via D2L  
 Office hours: Mon. 2:00-5:30; Tues. 9:30-11:00; other times by appt.

**Required Textbooks:**

Orcher, L.T. (2014). *Conducting Research: Social and Behavioral Science Methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyczak Publishing. ISBN #978-1-936523207.

Skloot, R. (2011). *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing Group. ISBN# 978-1-400052189.

**Supplemental Resources:**

- APA Style CENTRAL®: <http://www.apastyle.org>
- Healthy People 2020 web page: <https://www.healthypeople.gov>
- Lane Library Course Guide: <http://libguides.armstrong.edu/puhb6175>
- Lane Library: <http://library.armstrong.edu>

**Course Description:** Acquisition of skills necessary to develop research proposals.

**Student Evaluation:**

Assignment	Points
1. APA Tutorial Vidcast Series & Learning Check	----
2. Lane Library Plagiarism Tutorial	25
3. NIH Human Subject Protections Training Module	25
4. Henrietta Lacks Reflection Paper	25
5. Quantitative Journal Article Critique	25
6. Qualitative Journal Article Critique	25
7. Literature Review Paper	100
8. Literature Review Poster Presentation	25
9. Exam 1	50
10. Exam 2	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>

**Course Grading Rubric**

A = 315-350 points (90% -100%)  
 B = 280-314 points (80% - 89%)  
 C = 245-279 points (70% - 79%)  
 D = 210-244 points (60% - 69%)  
 F = <210 points (less than 60%)

## B. Course Objectives

At the completion of the course, the student will be able to meet specific course objectives, each of which contributes to the successful attainment of one or more MPH program competencies as illustrated in the following matrix:

Course Objectives	MPH Core Competencies					MPH Additional Competencies						
	BIO	ENVH	EPI	HSA	SBS	COM	AA	AM	CCD	BPHS	PDPP	LE
1. Identify appropriate research methods and designs in public health practice.	x	x	x	x	x		x			x		
2. Identify appropriate quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods evaluation techniques and determine appropriate uses and limitations.	x	x	x	x	x		x			x		
3. Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		
4. Define a public health problem and select relevant variables.		x	x	x	x			x	x	x		
5. Evaluate research designs, methods, and findings presented in the literature.	x	x	x	x	x		x					
6. Collect, summarize, and interpret information relevant to an issue and evaluate the integrity and comparability of data and identify gaps in data sources.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x			
7. Apply ethical principles to the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information.	x		x		x	x			x			
8. Identify relevant and appropriate literature searching databases and/or retrieval systems.				x			x			x		
9. Evaluate, develop and use appropriate data-gathering instruments and processes, including survey techniques, to acquire data.	x			x			x	x				
10. Understand the concepts of measurement validity and reliability.	x						x					

### **MPH CORE COMPETENCIES:**

- **Biostatistics (BIO):** Identify and apply appropriate statistical methods to analyze and describe a public health problem.
- **Environmental Health (ENVH):** Understand the relationship between environmental factors and community health; discuss remediation for environmental problems
- **Epidemiology (EPI):** Use epidemiologic methods to analyze patterns of disease and injury; discuss application to address problems.
- **Health Services Administration (HSA):** Demonstrate the ability to apply principles of leadership, policy development, budgeting, and program management in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of health programs for individuals and populations.
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS):** Address behavioral, social, and cultural factors that impact individual and population health and health disparities over the life span.

### **MPH ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES:**

- **Communication (COM):** Convey public health information using a variety of approaches.
- **Analytic/Assessment (AA):** Identify and utilize public health data to assess health status of populations.
- **Administration and Management:** Describe organizational structures, functions, and authorities of local, state, and federal public health agencies.
- **Community Culture and Diversity (CCD):** Recognize the role of cultural, social, and behavioral factors in the accessibility, availability, acceptability, and delivery of public health services.

- **Basic Public Health Sciences Skills (BPHS):** Describe scientific evidence related to a public health issue, concern, or intervention.
- **Policy Development and Program Planning (PDPP):** Gather information that will inform policy decisions, and describe implications of policy options.
- **Leadership and Ethics (LE):** Participate with stakeholders in identifying key public health values and a shared public health vision as guiding principles for community action.

## C. Health Science Department Policies

### E-mail Policy

The Health Sciences Department often communicates with its students via e-mail about policies, program changes, events, educational opportunities, and advisement, and other important issues. Because of privacy concerns and regulations, all e-mails will be sent to your official ASU e-mail address. It is imperative, and your responsibility, to check and maintain this account.

If you correspond with the Health Sciences Department or any of its faculty and staff using an e-mail account other than your assigned ASU account, the Department and its faculty are under no obligation to respond and accept no responsibility for information sent therein.

### Behavioral Standards

In addition to the academic requirements for your degree program, there are core performance standards required for its completion. These standards are deemed necessary for success in academic programs and employment in the degree fields:

1. It is essential the student behave in a professional manner. The student must not, in any fashion, cause distraction to the department, faculty, fellow students, or clients. Furthermore, the student must have the ability to: behave in an ethical manner; demonstrate good judgment, maturity (profanity in professional or academic settings will not be tolerated), sensitivity, and emotional stability; and establish effective harmonious relationships with faculty, fellow students, and clients.
2. It is essential that the student have the sensitivity, interpersonal, and professional skills sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups. Students will be evaluated using tools such as classroom performance and experiential evaluations, utilized by faculty and site supervisors, on the basis of their ability to appropriately adapt their manner of interaction with clients from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.
3. It is essential that the student have communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form. Students must be able to appropriately adjust presentation/communication styles to a level that is compatible with the communication abilities of the client(s).

### Policy on Distractions

Distractions of any kind negatively affect the fellow students and the professor, impeding the learning process. Any distraction will be viewed a significant disruption of the class, and *the student will be asked to leave the classroom immediately*. Distractions may include:

- Students using the text or voice functions on a cell phone;
- A beeper, cell phone, or any other noise-making device ringing or vibrating;
- Students leaving the classroom repeatedly, or leaving the classroom to make or answer a phone call or text message;
- Students having private conversations in the classroom; and
- Students doing any other work than that which is related to the material being presented in class at that time.

- Students behaving in a manner that substantially interferes with the ability of students and faculty to teach and learn.

Particular attention should be given to cell phones as they are especially distracting. The professor has the right to count the student as absent when the student violates the distraction policy.

### **Code of Student Integrity Policy**

This policy applies to all students enrolled in a course taught by Health Sciences faculty.

Students who are found to have violated the Department of Health Science's Behavioral Standards, Policy on Distractions or ASU's Code of Student Integrity (by plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or facilitation academic dishonesty, including coursework copyright infringement) will be immediately referred to the Armstrong Office of Student Integrity for adjudication. It is the student's responsibility to know and understand what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, etc.

Specific information on the Code of Student Integrity can be found at:

<https://www.armstrong.edu/administration/student-affairs-student-integrity>

### **Campus Carry Policy**

Georgia House Bill 280, commonly referred to as the "campus carry" legislation, took effect July 1, 2017. For more information on this new law (which amends O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127.1) and how it will be implemented on University System of Georgia campuses, including Armstrong State University, please visit the USG website for House Bill 280 at <http://www.usg.edu/hb280>. Individuals must check with the Registrar's Office to verify that the space where they wish to carry meets the requirements of the legislation.

## **D. Course Policies**

### **Attendance/Participation**

All students are expected to attend class and to participate in all class-related activities/assignments. Although you will not be graded directly for your attendance or class participation, engaging other students will benefit the overall course experience and deepen understanding of the course material. Students may discuss course assignments and provide assistance to one another; however, all individual assignments must be the original work of each student.

### **Submission of Assignments & Deadlines**

Due dates for all assignments are indicated in the course schedule. All assignments must be submitted in class (unless otherwise specified) on time in order to be eligible for full credit.

One of the things you will learn in this class is the effect of timeliness on the success or failure in the workplace. Accepting assignments late reinforces bad time management and procrastination. Therefore, any assignment turned in after the deadline will result in an automatic 10 point deduction if received from one minute to 48 hours after the deadline. Assignments not turned in within 48 hours after the deadline will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero. Extensions for assignment completion are granted only in cases of emergency when verified by written documentation, at the discretion of the instructor.

Resource files for Assignments will be posted in Desire2Learn (D2L). All Assignments are due at class time on the due date indicated in the course schedule. All Assignments must utilize APA format (unless otherwise specified), be typed with 12-point Times New Roman Arial, or Calibri font, double-spaced, and spell-checked; handwritten Assignments will *not* be accepted. The grade for each Assignment will include assessment of spelling and grammar.

Link to official Armstrong policy and statement: [www.Armstrong.edu/turnitin](http://www.Armstrong.edu/turnitin)

### APA Style & Writing Help

- APA Style CENTRAL®: <http://www.apastyle.org>
- The Armstrong Writing Center: <https://www.armstrong.edu/students/writing-center>
- Armstrong Lane Library: <http://libguides.armstrong.edu/citation/APA>

### Desire2Learn (D2L)

D2L will be used as the standard resource for posting course-related documents from the instructor (e.g., syllabus, handouts, case studies, journal reading assignments, resource materials, etc.). The D2L Grade Book will be used to post all student grades.

D2L will be used for some (but not all) assignment submissions by students. Details will be provided for individual assignment instructions.

Supplemental information and materials will be posted in D2L during the semester. Students are responsible for checking the course website on a regular basis for important postings and messages from the instructor. *Failure of the student to check the course website (including the mailbox) does not constitute a valid excuse for submitting assignments late.*

**C. Course Schedule** (as of 1/8/18); may be revised at discretion of instructor as needed)

Week	Date	Lecture Topics & Activities	Assignments Due (by class time)	Readings*
1	Jan. 8	Introduction to Research Methods ACTIVITY: Assignment of Literature Review Topics		
2	Jan. 15	MLK HOLIDAY – NO CLASS		
3	Jan. 22	LECTURE: Preliminary Considerations & Selecting Tentative Topics & Research Approach ACTIVITY: APA Learning Check		Orcher: Ch. 1, 4, 6 APA Tutorial Vidcast Series
4	Jan. 29	LECTURE: Planning a Research Project & Review of the Literature	Lane Library Plagiarism Tutorial (Pre & Post Tests via email)	Orcher 2, 3 Lane Library Research Tutorial
5	Feb. 5	ACTIVITY: Field trip to Lane Library – Session with Judith Garrison, CHP Reference Librarian (?)		Orcher: Ch. 2, 3
6	Feb. 12	LECTURE: Review of the Literature (cont.) ACTIVITY: Class Discussion for Sample Lit Reviews		Orcher: Ch. 2, 3 Sample Lit Reviews 1 & 3
7	Feb. 19	LECTURE: Research Ethics	NIH Human Subject Protections Online Training Module (Submit Certificate – Hard copy)	Orcher: Appendix D
8	Feb. 26	GUEST SPEAKER: Chableau Ford, IRB Administrator, Memorial University Medical Center ACTIVITY: Class Discussion: The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks	Henrietta Lacks Reflection Paper (Hard copy)	<i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks</i>
9	March 5	Exam 1		
10	March 12	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS!		
11	March 19	LECTURE: Quantitative Methods ACTIVITY: Class Discussion - Quantitative Journal Article Critique		Orcher: Ch. 5, 7, 8, 9, 12.14 Quantitative Journal Article (posted in D2L)
12	March 26	LECTURE: Qualitative Methods ACTIVITY: Class Discussion - Qualitative Journal Article Critique	Quantitative Journal Article Critique (Hard copy)	Orcher: Ch. 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, 16, 20 Qualitative Journal Article (posted in D2L)
13	April 2	LECTURE: From Research Proposal to Publication; Writing, Presenting, and Publishing Research Reports	Qualitative Journal Article Critique (Hard copy) Literature Review Poster (Electronic copy)	Orcher: Ch. 11, 27

\*Note: As of January 1, 2018, Armstrong State University has officially merged with Georgia Southern University; however, the final curricular transition will be effective as of Fall Semester 2018. Therefore, administrative details for this course primarily reflect historical policies of Armstrong's Health Sciences Department.

Week	Date	Lecture Topics & Activities	Assignments Due (by class time)	Readings*
14	April 9	ACTIVITY: Literature Review Poster Presentations (in class)	Literature Review Paper (Electronic & Hard Copy)	
15	April 16	No Class - in lieu of Armstrong Student Scholars Presentation (if accepted) on April 18		
16	April 23	GUEST SPEAKERS: (1) Bounphone Chanthavong, Director, Meridian Clinical Research; (2) Tatiana Eversley-Kelso, Data Manager, Clinical Research, Memorial University Medical Center		
17	April 30	Exam 2		

\*Additional readings (e.g., journal publications) may be added during the semester, and will be announced in D2L and/or class.

\*\*Complete details forthcoming as soon as available.

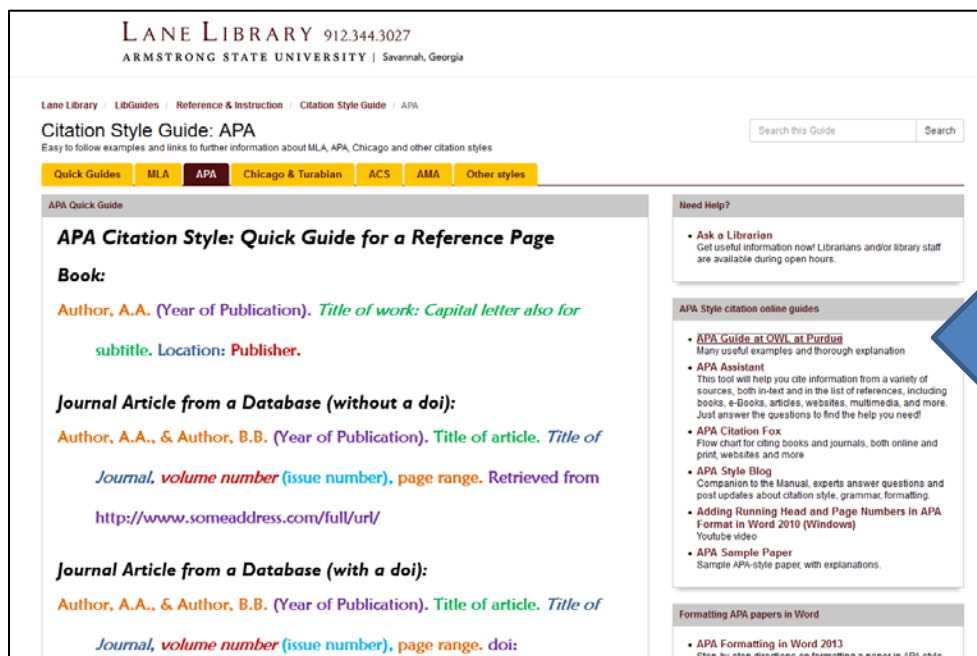
NOTE: Students should always complete the reading assignments prior to class and be prepared for discussion! ☺



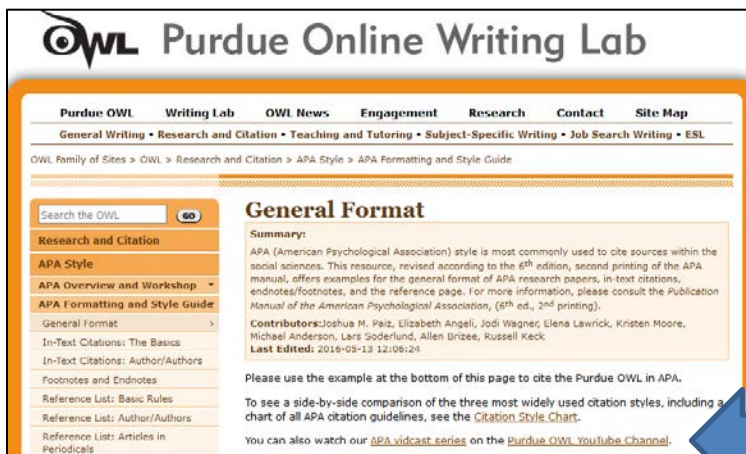
## D. Description of Course Requirements

### APA Tutorial Vidcast Series & Learning Check

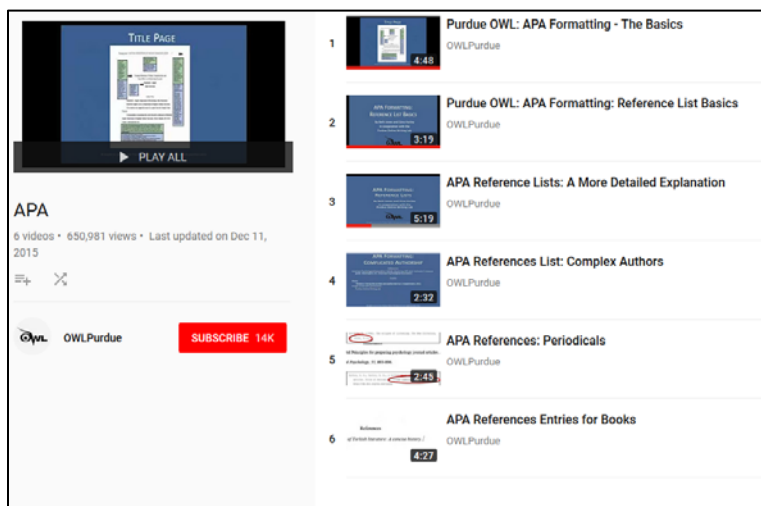
Lane Library has assembled an excellent Citation Style Guide for APA format, located at the following web site: <http://libguides.armstrong.edu/citation/APA>. Follow this link, and on the right side of the page, in the "APA Style citation online guides" box, select the top link, "APA Guide at OWL at Purdue" (example below):



The next screen will introduce many helpful resources for APA formatting:



At the bottom of the General Format section, access the APA vidcast series, and watch all 6 of the brief videos; the total viewing time will be slightly less than 25 minutes:



Refer to course syllabus for due date (must be completed *before* the class in order to be prepared for in-class activity).

## 2. Lane Library Plagiarism Tutorial (25 points)

Lane Library has assembled a comprehensive tutorial regarding plagiarism, and it is posted at the following website: <http://library.armstrong.edu/plagiarismtutorial.html> . For this assignment, each student will work individually to complete all eight steps of the tutorial and submit the following documentation by the due date (refer to course calendar).

### Plagiarism Tutorial

**Plagiarism Tutorial**

- Step 1. **Pre-Test Your Knowledge of Plagiarism**
- Step 2. **What is Plagiarism?**
- Step 3. **Citing Quotations**
- Step 4. **Acceptable Use or Plagiarism? Quiz #1**
- Step 5. **Paraphrasing and Summarizing**
- Step 6. **Acceptable Use or Plagiarism? Quiz #2**
- Step 7. **Post-Test Your Knowledge**
- Step 8. **Final Suggestions and Useful Links**

**Plagiarism is a serious academic offense!**

"Plagiarism is the intentional offering of the words, ideas, or computer data programs and/or graphics of others for ones own in any academic exercise. Examples of plagiarism include (but are not limited to): 1. The offering of anothers work, whether verbatim or paraphrased, as original material in an academic paper; 2. The offering of anothers original ideas or concepts as ones own, in an academic paper or assessed exercise; 3. The inclusion of anothers material in ones own work without appropriate or accurate citation or credit." *Armstrong Student Code of Conduct* p. 338-339, B1-4.

This tutorial was adapted from content created by the University Libraries, the University of Southern Mississippi and from Robert A. Harris's book *The Plagiarism Handbook : Strategies for Preventing, Detecting, and Dealing with Plagiarism*, Los Angeles, CA : Pyrczak Publishing, 2001.

(1) For Step 1, complete the pre-test, and send it to the instructor at her Armstrong email account ([sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu](mailto:sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu)); (the pre-test will prompt you for this information at the end)...it will look like this:

Fill in the email boxes below to check your score and to have the quiz answers mailed to yourself and/or your instructor.

Your School, Organization, etc. (required):


Your Name (required):

Your E-mail (required):

Confirm Your E-mail (required):

Your instructor's email (optional):

Enter the two generated words, separated by a space, in the box below.

☐ I'm not a robot 

Please single click "Submit" one time - it may take a moment to process. Thanks.

Mandatory, *not* optional...type professor's email here:  
 sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu

(2) Step 7 requires you to complete the post-test and send it to the instructor at her Armstrong email account ([sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu](mailto:sara.plaspohl@armstrong.edu)); (the post-test will prompt you for this information at the end, same as for the pretest).

The instructor will confirm receipt of both emails. In order for this assignment to be complete, the instructor must receive *both* emails from the LL Plagiarism Tutorial for pre-test and post-test results. In order to earn full credit, the student must correctly answer all 10 questions on the post-test.

### 3. NIH Human Subject Protections Training Module (25 points)

National Institutes for Health (NIH) provides a free comprehensive online training module regarding human subject protection in the conduct of research. The module is located at the following website: <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>. For this assignment, students will work individually to access the website, register as a new user, complete the online module, and print the certificate of completion at the end. The online module includes 7 sections: Introduction, History, Codes and Regulations, Respect for Persons, Beneficence, Justice, and Conclusion; all sections must be completed before the certificate can be printed. To earn full credit for this assignment, a *hard copy* of the certificate of completion must be submitted to the instructor in class on the due date (refer to course calendar).

NOTE: Students are advised to maintain a copy of the certificate of completion in their personal files for potential research activities in the future. Federal regulations require investigator training in human subject protections for all federally-funded research; in addition, many institutions routinely require this training for the conduct of all research studies, regardless of funding. Locally, the Armstrong Institutional Review Board requires this training for the conduct of all research conducted by faculty and students.

### 4. Henrietta Lacks Reflection Paper (25 points)

Each student will read *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, and then prepare/submit a reflection paper that provides thoughtful and individual responses to a short series of questions related to the reading. Complete assignment details for the reflection paper are posted in a D2L resource folder. Refer to course syllabus for due date. The critique will be submitted via *hard copy* only.

### 5. Quantitative Journal Article Critique (25 points)

Each student will review a research journal article that employs quantitative methods, then prepare/submit a critique of the article's research methods, applying course concepts. Refer to D2L for a resource folder that includes the journal article and detailed instructions for the assignment. Refer to course syllabus for due date. The critique will be submitted via *hard copy* only.

### 6. Qualitative Journal Article Critique (25 points)

Each student will review a research journal article that employs qualitative methods, then prepare/submit a critique of the article's research methods, applying course concepts. Refer to D2L for a resource folder

that includes the journal article and detailed instructions for the assignment. Refer to course syllabus for due date. The critique will be submitted via *hard copy* only.

#### **7. Literature Review Paper (100 points)**

Working either individually or in self-selected groups, students will prepare/submit a literature review paper on an assigned topic (provided by instructor on first day of class). Refer to D2L for a resource folder that includes detailed instructions for the assignment and the grading rubric. Refer to course syllabus for due date. The paper will be both via *hard copy* AND *electronically* via Turnitin (as D2L assignment).

#### **8. Literature Review Poster Presentation (25 points)**

Each student/student group will prepare and present a 10-15 minute summary of their literature review in a poster format. In addition, each student/student group will submit their poster for presentation to Armstrong's Student Scholars Symposium scheduled for April 18, 2018, and present if accepted (details to be provided as they become available at <https://www.armstrong.edu/students/student-scholars-symposium>). Assessment will include peer review for class presentation. Refer to D2L for a resource folder that includes detailed instructions for the assignment and the grading rubric.

#### **9. Exam 1 (50 points)**

Exam 1 will be given in class. It will be comprised of multiple answer and short answer/discussion questions covering all course content for the first half of the semester. The exam will be closed-book, with no external resources allowed (no books, notes, etc.). Refer to course syllabus for exam date.

#### **10. Exam 2 (50 points)**

Exam will be given in class. It will be comprised of multiple answer and short answer/discussion questions covering all course content for the last half of the semester. The exam will be closed-book, with no external resources allowed (no books, notes, etc.). Refer to course syllabus for exam date.

### **E. Tips for Success in the Course**

In order to maximize your experience for this course, the following recommendations are offered:

- Read the syllabus and become familiar with course requirements and policies.
- Keep up with reading assignments so you will come to class prepared for discussion.
- Do not wait until the last minute to complete assignments.
- Adhere to assignment due dates.
- Maintain respect and clear communication with class colleagues.
- Collaborate with class colleagues in study groups, which serve as a helpful resource for reinforcement of course concepts.
- Manage your time well!

#### **FINAL NOTE...**

The research process is very concise, focused, and detail-oriented. Whether you are planning a study, writing a grant to seek funding for a study, fielding a study, writing study results, and/or submitting a study for publication, all of these activities require attention to accuracy in order for your work to be successful.

**Your work for this course will be evaluated accordingly.**